

Why do we even have an appendix?



Have you had your appendix removed? Ever wondered what you're missing? We've always been told that it serves no known purpose and is removed routinely at the first hint of inflammation.

However, research is suggesting the appendix has been dismissed unfairly and has a couple of important functions.

Firstly, it has an important part to play in our immunity. It contains immune cells important for producing antibodies and for surveillance and destruction of mutated cells and invaders. It also contains cells important for regulating the immune system, helping to prevent it overreacting in certain situations.

Secondly, it acts as a reservoir of good bacteria for the bowel. It works kind of like a safe house keeping a reservoir supply of bacteria safe during infection, diarrhoea and antibiotic use. Things which usually wipe out and disrupt the normal microflora balance in the gut. This reservoir of bacteria can then be released into the bowel to quickly recolonise the microflora after these sorts of insults.



Risk of removal

Removal of the appendix has been linked with an increased risk of developing the following:

- Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)
- Crohn's disease
- Colitis
- Colorectal cancer
- Gallstones
- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Ischaemic heart disease
- Mental health disorders
- Endometriosis
- Parkinson's disease

Summary

So, if you have had your appendix removed, it is important that you give your gut ongoing support to maintain a healthy microbiome. This is especially important both just after your appendectomy operation, and during any antibiotic therapy. I can help direct you to the best quality products containing the particular strains of probiotics specific for you and your unique situation